

NCLIS 2006 HEALTH AWARDS FOR LIBRARIES FINALISTS

California: Pacific College of Oriental Medicine
Director: Naomi Broering

In 2004, the Pacific College of Oriental Medicine Library (PCOM) developed a model consumer health outreach program in partnership with five local San Diego clinics, senior centers and libraries to enable senior/older adults to access electronic health information. The program is ongoing. The purpose of the program is to improve the lives of the community seniors/adults, to promote healthy lifestyles by teaching access to reliable, accurate and authoritative health information and to improve home health care by providing sources for patient education information. The East-West Integrative Medicine approach of the college makes this program unique because it utilizes both scopes of medical knowledge. The partners include:

- First Lutheran Church, 3rd St Charitable Organization free senior clinic
- Florence Riford Senior Center
- Clairemont Friendship Community Center
- San Diego Public Library Taylor Pacific Beach Branch
- San Diego Public Library Riford La Jolla Branch

There are four major objectives and tasks:

1. To teach free health information computer classes at the partner sites and reach 2,500 people.
2. To implement technical services including wireless networking, a Library Web page, and develop instructional materials, tutorials and training brochures.
3. To provide free access to the Library's Web-based information links, to full text and print materials.
4. To evaluate project services, gather and analyze attendee surveys, publish articles and reports

Accomplishments and Outcomes to-date are:

- Needs assessment tools included preliminary meetings, questionnaires, surveys & interviews at partnership sites, which substantiated the need for a health information instructional program.
- The Library developed a consumer health collection and designed a webpage with Health Databases (MedlinePlus, Pub Med, NIH NCCAM, and DHHS systems), Senior Health section, Nutrition links and other authoritative health related links.
http://www.pacificcollege.edu/Library/health_databases.htm

http://www.pacificcollege.edu/Library/senior_health_databases.htm
http://www.pacificcollege.edu/Library/complementary_medicine.htm#2 (includes nutrition).
<http://www.pacificcollege.edu/Library/index.html> (access to e-books journals & databases).

- The Library emphasizes hands-on computer classes and community health information presentations, because this is the area of the greatest need, and our expertise in computers and medical sciences is well utilized to make a valuable contribution. Attendees are taught how to access health information using MedlinePlus and other NIH databases in English and Spanish, including prescriptions drugs, various health diseases and conditions, diet (nutrition), finding physicians, Medicare, health organizations and hospitals.
- Baseline data & project goals to reach 2,500 people have been surpassed, making the program highly successful. Over 3,300 seniors/adults have attended our Health Information Literacy sessions and over 425 participated in the hands-on computer classes. MedlinePlus en español and the new MedlinePlus/Drug Information Herbs & Supplements are heavily used.
- Evaluation questions and interviews indicate that few knew how to access health information nor were they aware of MedlinePlus & other databases. Questionnaires and telephone surveys indicate that all attendees felt they gained previously unknown knowledge, computer skills, and they expressed their appreciation.
- Lessons Learned include the need for one-on-one instruction, labor-intensive instruction to teach seniors basic mouse and computer use, and Wi-Fi wireless network issues. There are other local libraries and senior centers asking to participate.

Connecticut: Healthnet, Lyman Maynard Stowe Library, University of Connecticut Health Center

Director: Alberta Richetelle

Healthnet: Connecticut Consumer Health Information Network is an outreach program of the Lyman Maynard Stowe Library, University of Connecticut Health Center. Healthnet's goal is to increase access to high quality, authoritative consumer health information for the citizens of the state of Connecticut directly and through their local public libraries. As the public's demand for health information increased in the early 1980's, it was apparent that a statewide formal program was needed to meet these information needs. This was reinforced by the results of a 1984 statewide survey conducted by the Connecticut State Library of the information needs of over 500 households in Connecticut in which health information ranked third as a topic of concern. Healthnet began as a grant-funded program in January 1985. The University of Connecticut Health Center is home to the School of Medicine, School of Dental Medicine, graduate medical programs, John Dempsey Hospital, and the University's medical clinics. The Library provides services to over 850 students, 775 faculty, approximately 2,000 researchers and research assistants, and over 2,000 administrative and support staff. Connecticut has 169 towns, of varying population sizes, economic, and literacy levels, all of which have at least one public library. The libraries vary greatly in their size and resources. The Healthnet program strives to reach every library to inform the staff and its library users of available services and training opportunities that can help meet the community's health information needs. Healthnet services and programs include: *training of public librarians to effectively answer consumer health questions and to locate and use authoritative, high quality resources including print, online, and Internet resources; *assistance to help public librarians answer consumer health questions; *research service for Connecticut residents who can call Healthnet directly to obtain a customized packet of printed information related to a personal medical concern; *training of consumers to help them develop effective search skills to do their own research; *evaluation of consumer health resources; *maintenance of a website with topical resource guides and other tools to help librarians and consumers research consumer health questions. Healthnet's website is at <http://library.uchc.edu/departm/hnet>. Each of Healthnet's online Resource Guides, directed to health consumers, focuses on a medical topic such as children's health, mental health, or aging. The Guides also provide direction to public librarians searching for specific consumer health information. They incorporate descriptions of relevant, recommended books, patient brochures, organizations, government agencies, and websites. To reach its overall goal of promoting the public library as the central source for a community's health information needs, Healthnet has offered more than fifty different training workshops for librarians since its inception. These have included medical reference workshops, programs on evaluating and finding authoritative health information on the Internet, medical database searching, special seminars on important health topics including alternative health resources, environmental health resources, special lectures on topics such as nutrition resources, medical privacy, and locating and evaluating health news stories. In 2000, Healthnet initiated a program to teach consumers

how to find quality health information on the Internet. Called “Healthy Websites”, the program demonstrates high quality Internet resources where individuals can find information to improve their health literacy on topics such as diseases and medical conditions, treatments, medications, and health care providers. So far, twenty-one of these programs have been presented at public libraries. The “Healthy Websites” program has also been offered to librarians to teach them the basics of searching the Internet for health information and allow them to offer a similar program in their own libraries. Guides used for the “Healthy Websites” program are located on Healthnet’s homepage at <http://library.uchc.edu/departm/hnet/rbempowermentplus.html> The Healthnet program is continuously monitored by Healthnet staff to determine if program goals are being met. Trainees attending workshops complete written evaluations to determine if training objectives are being met. Staff makes on-site visits to public libraries to talk to library staff about the program and to determine if there are additional program needs.

Idaho: Portneuf District Library
Director: Jeanne Farnworth

The Portneuf District Library in Chubbuck, Idaho serves over 20,000 Bannock County residents surrounding the city of Pocatello. This population includes Native American families living on the Fort Hall Indian Reservation, migrant Hispanic workers and their families, Asian Americans, African American and Caucasian families. Our community is an eclectic mixture of rural and urban lifestyles. However, state statistics show that 1 out of 5 Idahoans is obese. According to a local diabetes survey, 63% of youth living on the Fort Hall Indian Reservation are obese or at risk for becoming obese. In addition, statistics (gleaned from our local Developmental Assets Survey) show that only 36% of our community's youth feels that they have positive family communication. According to the same survey, only 26% of our young people feel that adults in our community value youth. Just 33% believe parents and other adults model positive, responsible behavior. Recognizing the need for quality fitness programs for adolescents and their families, the Portneuf District Library targets this multigenerational audience. Because adolescence is beginning earlier in many children, we include all youth from grades 5 through 12. Our target audience includes youths ages 11-19 and their parents, grandparents or caregivers. We registered 50 adolescents and their adult family members or caregivers at the first 2 events. Some participants brought their extended family serving to increase family communication and also effectiveness of the event programming. Over 125 different individuals participated in each of the first 2 events. Each adolescent who participates in our events receives a free pedometer, event T-shirt, pool pass, novel of choice and goody bag (bags are filled with area hiking maps, art walk maps and other health and fitness related opportunities in our area).

Held at the Portneuf District Library 4 times from May 2005- May 2006, our Get Real, Get Fit! events incorporate the In The Mix video and discussion, break out sessions and fitness stations designed to meet a variety of needs and interests, and a one-mile fitness walk. In The Mix is an award winning fitness theme video designed to stimulate discussion and activities that educate adolescents and their families about healthy lifestyle choices. The break out sessions and fitness samplers include Stress Relief Samplers (Yoga, Reading for Relaxation, Massage), Sports Samplers (Low-impact Aerobics, Weight Resistance Training, Walk Your Way to Wellness), Lifestyle Samplers (Nutrition Labels Literacy, Substance Abuse Awareness, Making Healthy Eating Choices, Making Time For Exercise). These fun-filled, hands-on learning events not only promote fitness, they help us strengthen ties to our target community as youth and families will see the library as an information center- more than just a clearinghouse for books. The events serve as tools for educating the target community about the many health services that are available throughout our community as well as about healthy, fit lifestyle choices. The Get Real, Get Fit! events also enhance connections to young people as we show youth in our community that adults do value them and care about their fitness and health. In addition, the Portneuf District Library and our community partners provide

adult role models that promote healthy, responsible behaviors. Attendance is an indicator used for evaluation. Participants' pre-test and post test scores are compared in order to evaluate effectiveness of events. The pre and post tests scores indicate increase in knowledge of exercise, label reading and making healthy choices. We have completed 2 of this year's 4 events and over 91% of participants scored higher on post test knowledge, indicating an increase in knowledge about fitness and improved ability to understand and use health information on food product labels.

Kentucky: Olive Hill Adult Learning Center/Library
Director: Vickie Rose

The Olive Hill Adult Learning Center/Library is located in a very rural area of Kentucky. Our county is the only county in the state of Kentucky without a tax supported library. The library we do have is totally staffed by volunteers. The library is connected to the Olive Hill Adult Learning Center. We applied for a Grant through the Libraries for the Future and the Metlife Foundation in New York City. We were awarded a grant to educate the teen population in our area. The teens in our area have no recreation center, such as a YMCA, and if there was one would not have the money to attend, so we established the Get Real Get Fit Program! in the area. We had targeted 60 families in four sessions. I finished the last session last week, and I had fifty families to attend just this one. The total number of families served in the four sessions was over one hundred. I raised money for free merchandise for the teens, such as T-shirts, water bottles, gift certificates, free healthy food and refreshments, and free membership to the local gym. I am very proud of our library and our volunteers. We now have a new library that was completely built by volunteers. It is two floors and has a lift to accommodate people who cannot use the stairs. I hope in the future that our community will now support a library because now they see just how much it is needed and all the people it can help.

Massachusetts: Access to Community Health Resources, Treadwell Library, Massachusetts General Hospital

Director: Elizabeth Schneider

In 2000, Treadwell Library, the health sciences library of Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) partnered with MGH Community Health Associates (CHA) to form a new model for providing health information in four poor, urban and underserved communities. A collaborative project ARCH (Access to Community Health Resources) accomplished this through the MGH Community HealthCare Centers in Revere, Chelsea, Charlestown and Everett, MA. The goal of ARCH was to provide access, especially electronic, to quality health information to help people living and working in the communities make more informed health decisions. The project crossed organizational boundaries to reach all types of educators who could impact the health of the community including clinicians, outreach workers, health educators, public librarians, Head Start staff, school nurses. The target communities, just north of Boston, are culturally and linguistically diverse. Many residents are new immigrants or refugees, unemployed or working poor, and uninsured. CHA has well-established relationships with these communities and an in-depth knowledge of their health problems. They identified major health problems such as asthma, AIDS/HIV, hepatitis C, and substance abuse. With CHA's extensive knowledge of community needs, Treadwell leveraged its expertise in health information resources to best meet the health information needs of these communities. ARCH implemented several major components over the last five years.

- 1) The ARCH Resource Center was established in the Revere HealthCare Center with a small print collection and two PC's with access to the Internet and MGH network (<http://massgeneral.org/library>). This space is used for small group and individual hands-on teaching and consultation.
- 2) A user-friendly web site (<http://www.arch-mgh.org>) was created with links to carefully selected and culturally appropriate free health information on the Internet. The content reflects community needs and meshes with Healthy People 2010 goals. (<http://www.healthypeople.gov/About/>).
- 3) Conducting educational and training sessions was a major focus of the ARCH project. ARCH's Certified Health Education Specialist led sessions for clinicians, outreach workers, health educators, public librarians, Head Start staff, school nurses and senior citizens. Understaffing of the public libraries prevented continuing efforts with this group. High demands on clinicians' time made scheduling challenging.
- 4) Content is continually added to the ARCH web site including creating a page in Spanish to serve the needs of the large Spanish speaking population. Multilingual information is provided in Arabic, Bosnian, Russian, Somali, and Vietnamese.
- 5) Another component, the ARCH Patient Education Initiative, provides printed patient education brochures to the Health Centers. Through a Community Languages grant from

the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners, ARCH purchased print handouts in multiple languages for patients to use. Treadwell purchased materials for MGH interpreters and the MGH ESOL program. The objectives of the ARCH project were met. ARCH delivered high quality health information to individuals and organizations in the target communities through the ARCH Resource Center, ARCH web site and training sessions to clinicians, outreach workers, school nurses and community residents. From 2002-2005 there were 774 individual requests for information. From 2001-2005, 182 sessions/presentations taught 1316 attendees who learned how to access and use ARCH online resources to find health information to meet personal needs or those of their patients, students, clients, etc. Evaluation data was collected in multiple ways: web site usage statistics; evaluation of web site's content by a physician, mental health librarian, drug outreach worker and diabetes primary care team; a survey of web site usefulness; evaluations of presentations, training sessions, and Patient Education Initiative; and pre- and post-training surveys. Evaluation data indicate that ARCH did accomplish its major goals and objectives and is highly valued by its target population.

Minnesota: Minnesota Prevention Resource Center, Minnesota Institute of Public Health

Director: Sally Mandler

The purpose of the Minnesota Prevention Resource Center (MPRC) is to make resources about preventing alcohol, tobacco and other drug use problems available throughout the state. MPRC has provided information through its library and clearinghouse, as well as its training and technical assistance services since 1981. We emphasize building the capacity of prevention practitioners at the county and local community levels while continuing to serve individuals, families, peers, schools, public libraries and community-based organizations throughout Minnesota in their efforts to prevent alcohol, tobacco and other drug (ATOD) use problems and to promote chemical health. Members of our target audience - county public health professionals, school personnel and local prevention practitioners – were recruited to participate in focus groups. Their input formed the basis upon which we developed our initial service plan. Subsequent data gathered from our target audience informs the continued evolution of MPRC services. Because of this, MPRC's program activities address the target audience's work to reduce risk factors and enhance protective factors in our mutual efforts to prevent ATOD problems. MPRC provides technical assistance in prevention program planning, implementation, evaluation and best practices. We also offer educational and networking opportunities through conferences and regional trainings. It is the research-based information found in our special library collection and through online literature searches as well as our clearinghouse of publications, which form the heart of our services that support local prevention efforts.

Mississippi: Rowland Medical Library, University of Mississippi Medical Center
Director: Ada Seltzer

The University of Mississippi Medical Center's [UMC] Rowland Medical Library and the University Hospitals and Clinics established the Consumer Health Education Center [CHEC] to reduce the effects of inadequate health information associated with health disparities and improve the knowledge of health issues associated with health literacy among all members of the community. Patients intimidated by the health care delivery system are reluctant to comply with prescribed treatment programs. Low reading levels and the scarcity of appropriate, accessible consumer health information further increase health disparities. CHEC's goal is to work with such individuals to provide health information and instill confidence in making health-related decisions. The primary CHEC location is at the Jackson Medical Mall, which houses UMC clinics and other medical offices. The community surrounding the Mall is predominantly African-American with 27-36% of residents below poverty level. The Mall was strategically located in this economically depressed area to address the health care disparities. The second site (multipurpose room) is located in Holmes County at the UMC-owned Lexington Hospital, serving an economically depressed, rural African-American (79%) population. Although not open daily, this site serves patient needs and community health education activities coordinated by the hospital's Clinical Staff Educator. A trained staff provides personal and confidential services, supplying health information requested by clients at a level they understand. Information is provided at no cost and includes low-reading level pamphlets on hundreds of topics, a non-circulating consumer health and medical reference library, and videos viewed behind a privacy screen. Three computers provide access to the Internet to supplement available print materials. The CHEC Web site (<http://chec.library.umc.edu>) provides authoritative electronic health information, and interested clients are trained in its use. Outcomes and measurements focus on individuals who seek health information so that they 1) obtain information that answers their health questions, 2) gain knowledge specific to their health issues through the materials provided, and 3) demonstrate confidence in finding information to increase their understanding of their health conditions. For the past three years, an average of 2,000+ clients have visited CHEC annually. African-Americans represent 55-64% of these clients and over 80% are females. CHEC clients request information on an average of 3,600+ topics annually for which staff has provided answers for over 96%. Annually, about 80% of this information is supplied from the print collections and the remainder is answered using electronic sources. For FY05, users logged 40,585 Web site hits. Confidence in finding health information is also measured in the number of repeat visitors. Approximately one quarter of the clients for the past two years were repeat visitors.

The Visitor Registration Log collects basic demographics for each client, topics requested, and the types of materials provided. A User Satisfaction Form is randomly distributed to 200-250 clients annually to gather information about the quality of CHEC services, user satisfaction with the materials provided, and city/county/state of residence. This instrument reveals that 14% of patrons are referred by a health care provider, 6% by

a friend or relative, and 80% visit on their own. Ninety-eight percent of those surveyed in FY05 found the information they were seeking. These data reveal that CHEC continues to meet its goals of helping the target population locate useful information on their health questions, reducing health information disparities, and improving health literacy. Clients seek and gain knowledge about their personal health issues. They demonstrate confidence in finding information at CHEC or on the Web. Privacy regulations and patient confidentiality issues require Institutional Review Board approval and consent forms that are not user-friendly in a facility that strives to be non-intimidating; consequently, specific health and literacy outcomes for each client are unavailable.

South Carolina: REACH 2010 Charleston and Georgetown Diabetes Coalition Library Partnership

Director: Barbara Carlson

The REACH 2010 Charleston and Georgetown Diabetes Coalition's Library Partnership expands Internet access at 5 community sites and trains people to use high quality diabetes information through libraries and the Internet. This library-community-campus partnership consists of the Charleston County Public Library System, the Georgetown County Public Library System, the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) College of Nursing, the MUSC Department of Library Science and Informatics, and community-based organizations. The REACH 2010 Charleston and Georgetown Diabetes Coalition aims to eliminate disparities for more than 12,000 African Americans diagnosed with diabetes by improving self-management and care. The Coalition includes over 16 organizations and people with diabetes. Activities cover 1,600 square miles, along 150 miles of coastal South Carolina, and happen where people live, work, worship, play, and seek health care. The Coalition improves access, care, education, and outcomes within health care systems, enhances community development, empowerment and education for African Americans with diabetes, and builds coalition power, advocacy and sustainability.

The REACH Library Partnership has been part of the Coalition since 1999, and includes faith leaders, public librarians, health sciences librarians, grass-root diabetes advocates, community centers' directors, IT experts, and volunteers. Librarians from Charleston and Georgetown counties collaborate with REACH's health sciences librarian and lay community health advisors/advocates to teach health information skills. The partnership works to improve the diabetes collections in public libraries, and produces posters, bookmarks, and pathfinders to help people find diabetes materials in all formats. Partners write letters to state legislators in support of public libraries on behalf of people with diabetes. A series of "Learn About Diabetes @ the Library" classes in 2003 combined neighborhood branch library promotion with lay community diabetes education. Pre-post test data showed increased awareness and use of libraries for health information among participants. The program had a significant positive impact on people with 12 or fewer years of education, and/or those 60 years and older—the most vulnerable and needy persons with diabetes.

In 2004, a community health information needs assessment linked local digital divide and health issues when the partnership developed, pilot tested, and administered a survey, held three focus groups, analyzed results, and proposed projects. Vision, passion, and commitment provide ongoing local access to information resources, training, and services for underserved health consumers. This collaboration, working through planning and steering committees, has notable accomplishments:

- Established and maintains Internet access at 2 community centers, 2 churches, and 1 diabetes advocacy/education center. Four of these sites are in rural areas with limited or no prior Internet access or library services.
 - Operates a “train-the-trainer” program. Librarians train and support volunteers and teach people with diabetes, their family, and friends how to judge the quality of health information. Progress is measured through pre-post tests, trainers’ journals, logs, and focus groups.
 - Emphasizes interactive multimedia for easy and fun ways to learn about diabetes, enabling participants with low literacy and limited computer skills to learn about healthy eating, increasing physical activity, standards of care, and diabetes life-long learning.
 - Created a teaching curriculum that guides learning through a digital collection of health websites, CCPL and GCPL websites, and resources from the SC State Library’s DISCUS project: MedlinePlus, American Diabetes Association, Hands-on-Health-SC, Health and Wellness Resource Center, and others, as well as basic computer skills.
 - Produced new evaluation instruments to measure information seeking behaviors and attitudes. Created tailored educational materials and is constructing a website for faith leaders to help people with diabetes.
- The REACH Library Partnership promotes a better understanding of the role of libraries and networked health information in eliminating health disparities. Good information is now a higher health priority.

Tennessee: Memphis Public Library Health Information Center
Director: Betty Anne Wilson

The purpose of Memphis Public Library's Health Information Center (HIC), located at 3030 Poplar Avenue in Memphis, TN is to be the central resource for health information with the following objectives and activities:

- a. Provide accurate, current information to expand health literacy in many formats for equal access to resources. Staff continually promotes the collection in the community.
- b. Provide access to health care through technology. A Virtual HIC was developed.
- c. Provide computer training for easy access to the Virtual HIC.
- d. Provide information on general health, community health concerns, and specific diseases. Educate customers on these topics through programs.
- e. Answer health questions of all customers accurately.
- f. Become a recognized community asset to empower customers to improve their health. The HIC participates in many community events to promote a healthier Memphis and serves on the Regional Health Council and "Healthy Memphis".
- g. Collaborate with the medical community to enhance access to health information. The HIC co-sponsors health screenings, conducts health fairs and workshops, and is active in many local organizations that establish community health priorities.

Many objectives have been achieved.

- a. The collection has continued to grow.
- b. The Virtual HIC enhances access to information. Twenty-one specialized categories provide easy access at <http://www.memphislibrary.org/virtualhic/> . It includes links to databases and health magazines, website reviews, reading recommendations, and MEDLINE information. The virtual HIC has a local monthly virtual newsletter.
- c. The HIC collaborates with health organizations to target specific health issues having an average six health screenings per year.
- d. The HIC sponsors health fairs which recruit 30-40 organizations to provide booths and conduct 15-20 workshops.
- e. Doctors and health care professionals rely on the HIC. Area doctors refer patients to the HIC, recommend materials for the collection, and volunteer on the HIC Advisory Board.

f. Approximately 40% of Business & Sciences Desk questions are health related. This totals over 5,400 questions/year, or more than 15/day.

The impact of the HIC is remarkable. It relies on typical library statistics, attendance figures, web hits and trends to document its success.

a. Use of the HIC has jumped 58% in three years, an average of almost 20% per year. Opening circulation was 1,593 items per month. Now the average is 2,509 per month.

b. Last year, there were 7,560 hits to the Virtual HIC, or 630/month.

c. Sixteen health computer classes were conducted in 3 years in-house. Additional classes are taught at community health agencies.

d. Health fair attendance ranged from 1,200 to 1,500 per event. At each health fair, participants were accurately diagnosed with potential health problems that sent them to the hospital.

e. There have been at least six screenings for specific diseases each year.

f. HIC programs have been conducted at the library and at health agencies.

g. HIC's positive role has been documented by experts, such as Helen Osborne, in health publications.

To change lifestyles and positively impact the community's health requires long term commitment. The HIC remains steadfast in providing services for those with low functional literacy, low health information literacy and low incomes.

Virginia: Community Outreach Information Network, Tompkins-McCaw Library, Virginia Commonwealth University

Director: Jean Shipman

COIN: Community Outreach Information Network

Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) and its Health System offer four consumer health information centers to the general public to empower individuals to learn more about their health. These four centers collaborate as the COIN network – Community Outreach Information Network. Since 2002, 24,290 individuals have used COIN. Two COIN libraries, the MCVH Auxiliary of the VCU Health System’s Community Health Education Center (CHEC) and the Massey Cancer Center’s Linen Powell Resource Library, are located on the VCU Medical College of Virginia Campus. The Charlotte K. Roberts Women's Health Resource Center (WHRC) and the Massey Cancer Center’s Patient Resource Center are located at the Stony Point clinic. These four libraries provide information on general health topics, diabetes, cancer, and women's and family health, in multiple languages and in a variety of ways. Besides offering books, Internet access and assistance, COIN offers a virtual reference service where users can electronically talk with a professional medical librarian. Users can also telephone for assistance by using a centralized COIN telephone number or can send emails. The need for COIN was determined through a community-wide assessment project funded by the National Library of Medicine (NLM). The key information needs identified were diabetes, cancer, and asthma. The assessment, which included surveys, focus groups and informal feedback, also indicated that the public obtain their health information through the Internet, friends, and other non-official venues. People prefer to talk with someone about their health. To address the assessment findings, another award was obtained from NLM to create COIN – in order to inform people within the Richmond area of the four COIN centers and the ease at which they can obtain reliable quality health information on their desired topics through both human interactions and technology. The COIN centers continually assess their value through user surveys (print and online), informal feedback and through several advisory committees that include community representatives. As suggestions are offered, changes in services and resources are made.

COIN is publicized through community and local health fairs, newspapers, pens, information prescriptions, and via health education sessions including ones that specifically address health literacy. Training sessions for public librarians, pharmacists, senior center staff and volunteers have been conducted. A single COIN website <http://www.library.vcu.edu/coin/> provides users with subject access to the four COIN centers and also “quicklinks” to reliable health information. This website is available in English and Spanish, 24x7. Users calling the central COIN number are referred to the appropriate COIN center based on their health topic, physical location and travel mobility. A total of 185 health education sessions have been offered with an attendance of 11,600. The CHEC Librarian taught eight health literacy classes for health professionals.

A brief description of each COIN center is provided below:

Community Health Education Center

CHEC has 3,110 print books and media, 24 magazines, 8 computers that offer Internet access, and children's materials. CHEC has materials for all ages and all reading levels in multiple languages. CHEC is located on the ground floor of the VCU Health System Gateway.

Massey Cancer Center Linen Powell Resource Library - This library has 1,295 books, plus videotapes and audiotapes on topics related to cancer. Annually, an average of 2,060 information packets are distributed. This center is near the Dalton Oncology Clinic.

Patient Resource Center at Stony Point - located at 9000 Stony Point Parkway. Books, videos and Internet access are available. Annually, an average of 250 information packets are distributed.

Women's Health Resource Center

This center offers Internet access, 130 books, and referrals to community services. The center is located in the Stony Point Women's Health Center.